

Remarks/Arguments:

This is a reply to the office action of October 5.

We have correct minor errors in the specification as paragraphs [0013], [0026] and [0027]. Minor changes in claims 24, 37, 39 and 42 are also proposed. Claim 24 has been amended to correct its dependency. Claim 37 has been amended by inserting "said" prior to "hydraulic drive motor".

Claim 39 is amended to provide correct antecedent basis for the elements claimed. Thus "hydraulic motor" has been changed to "hydraulic drive motor", and "drive motor" has also been changed to "hydraulic drive motor", whereas "electric drive motor" has been changed to "electric motor".

Claim 42 has been amended by changing "connection" to "between" and "to" to "and".

The examiner has allowed claims 22 - 43, and the above changes are intended to improve clarity without affecting claim scope.

Claim 21 was rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,794,920. Kindly reconsider the rejection in view of the changes that have been made to claim 21 and the remarks below.

Claim 21 has been amended to state that the hydraulic actuatable coupling means couple the drive motor to the winch spool. Also, in response to an antecedent basis objection, "said hydraulic pump" has been changed to "said hydraulic supply means", consistent with the initial recitation of that term. Finally, the control means has been defined to control the supply of hydraulic fluid from the hydraulic supply means to the hydraulic

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pump and the hydraulically actuatable coupling means.

In the reference cited by the examiner, the hydraulic motor which drives the winch spool is directly coupled by a shaft to the winch spool, whereas in claim 21 as amended, "hydraulically actuatable coupling means" are provided to couple the hydraulic motor to the winch spool. This allows free wheeling of the winch spool to enable a cable wound thereon to be readily coupled to a load. Thereafter, when fluid is supplied to the coupling means and hydraulic motor, the coupling means couples the hydraulic motor to the winch spool and the hydraulic motor drives the winch spool to wind in the cable. We believe that claim 21 as amended is allowable over the reference, and that this application is now in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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